

Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PFOR,EEC

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MAINTAINS PRESSURE ON DIRECT
ELECTIONS ISSUE,BRINKHORST SAYS NINE PLAN TO SIGN ABOARD SEPT.

20

1. AS THEY HAVE AT EVERY PLENARY SESSION THIS YEAR,EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENTARIANS AT THEIR CURRENT MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG KEPT
UP THE PRESSURE ON THE EC COUNCIL TO TAKE THE DEFINITIVE STEP
IN APPROVING DIRECT ELECTIONS.IN RESPONSE,DUTCH STATE SECRETARY
BRINKHORST,SPEAKING AS PRESIDENT IN OFFICE OF THE
EC COUNCIL,CONFIRMED ON SEPTEMBER 16 THAT THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS
PLAN TO SIGN DOCUMENTS PROVIDING FOR THE ELECTION OF THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE AT THEIR SEPTEMBER 20 COUNCIL
MEETING. BRINKHORST SAID THAT OBSTACLES WHICH HAD PREVENTED SIGNA-
TURE AT THE COUNCIL'S JULY 27-28 SESSION HAVE NOW BEEN OVERCOME,
AND THAT THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS AGREED AT THEIR INFORMAL
MEETING IN THE NETHERLANDS SEPTEMBER 11-12 TO PROCEED WITH SIGNA-
TURE.

2. PREDICTABLY,BRINKHORST'S STATEMENT REGARDING THE
SEPTEMBER 20 SIGNING MET WITH WIDE APPROVAL AMONG THE
PARLIAMENTARIANS ALTHOUGH FRENCH COMMUNIST DEPUTIES
WERE NEGATIVE (M.P. BORDU DESCRIBED THE WHOLE AFFAIR
AS A " CARICATURE OF DEMOCRACY") AND A FEW BRITISH
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LABORITES FELT THAT THE EC IS NOT YET

READY FOR DIRECT ELECTIONS. SEVERAL MEMBERS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT WHILE THE COUNCIL DECISION TO BE SIGNED SEPTEMBER 20 SPECIFIES THE AIM OF HOLDING THE FIRST DIRECT ELECTION IN MAY/JUNE 1978 IT DOES NOT IRREVOCABLY SETTLE THE TIMING QUESTION; MOST PARLIAMENTARIANS AGREED THAT EP MUST HOLD FEET OF COUNCIL AND MEMBER GOVERNMENTS TO THE FIRE IN ORDER TO ASSURE THAT ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE IN MAY/JUNE 1978. THE PARLIAMENT CONCLUDED ITS DISCUSSION BY ADOPTING A RESOLUTION WHICH,INTER ALIA,CALLS UPON MEMBER STATE GOVERNMENTS AND PARLIAMENTARIANS TO SET NATIONAL RATIFICATION PROCEDURES IN MOTION EXPEDITOUSLY TO INSURE THAT THE INTENDED ELECTORAL DATE IS MET.
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